

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

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Listing of Claims:

1. (original) A treatment agent for hydrophilicity comprising silica particulates and polymer of vinyl alcohol series in the weight ratio in the range 30:70~70:30, amounting to 0.2~25 weight percent in total of both, in which said silica particulates are coated with said polymer of vinyl alcohol series, and dispersed in aqueous medium as coated particles having the average particle diameter 5~1000 nm.

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2. (currently amended) A method for preparing a treatment agent for hydrophilicity, wherein said method comprising:

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a process of dissolving or dispersing polymer of vinyl alcohol series in a 0.3~17.5 weight percent relative to the entire treatment agent,

a process of adding silica particulates of 5~100 nm in the average particle diameter to a dissolution or dispersion system of polymer of vinyl alcohol series formed in the previous process in a 0.3~17.5 weight percent relative to the entire treatment agent and in an amount so that the weight ratio of said silica particulates and said polymer of vinyl alcohol series becomes 30:70~70:30, and furthermore,

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a process of forcibly dispersing "aggregates of polymer of vinyl alcohol series with silica particulates" formed by the addition of said silica particulates.

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3. (new) A treatment agent for hydrophilicity consisting essentially of silica particulates and polymer of vinyl alcohol series in the weight ratio in the range 30:70~70:30, amounting to 0.2~25 weight percent in total of both, in which said silica particulates are coated with said polymer of vinyl alcohol series, and dispersed in aqueous medium as coated particles having the average particle diameter 5~1000 nm.

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4. (new) The treatment agent according to claim 1, and further comprising an antimicrobial drug.

5. (new) The treatment agent according to claim 4, wherein the antimicrobial drug comprises zinc pyrithione, 2-(4-thiazoryl)-benzimidazole, 1,2-benzisothiazoline, 2-n-octyl-4-isothiazoline-3-on, N-(fluorodichloromethylthio)phthalimide, N,N-dimethyl-N'-phenole-N'-(fluorodichloromethylthio)-sulfamide, methyl 2-benzimidazolecarbamate, bis(dimethylthiocarbamoyl)-disulfide, N-(trichloromethylthio)-4-cyclohexane-1,2-dicrboxyimide, or barium metaborate.

6. (new) The treatment agent according to claim 1, wherein the treatment agent consists essentially of silica particulates and polymer of vinyl alcohol series in the weight ratio in the range 30:70~70:30, amounting to 0.2~25 weight percent in total of both, in which said silica particulates are coated with said polymer of vinyl alcohol series, and dispersed in aqueous medium as coated particles having the average particle diameter 5~1000 nm; and
an antimicrobial drug.

7. (new) The treatment agent according to claim 6, wherein the antimicrobial drug comprises zinc pyrithione, 2-(4-thiazoryl)-benzimidazole, 1,2-benzisothiazoline, 2-n-octyl-4-isothiazoline-3-on, N-(fluorodichloromethylthio)phthalimide, N,N-dimethyl-N'-phenole-N'-(fluorodichloromethylthio)-sulfamide, methyl 2-benzimidazolecarbamate, bis(dimethylthiocarbamoyl)-disulfide, N-(trichloromethylthio)-4-cyclohexane-1,2-dicrboxyimide, or barium metaborate.